

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing at least one isocyanate ~~isocyanates by reaction of~~ comprising reacting at least one amine amines with phosgene in the presence of at least one inert organic solvents solvent in a reactor; and ~~subsequent work-up~~ working up of the reaction mixture leaving the reactor, wherein the solvent is separated off ~~from the~~ at least one isocyanate in an at least a two-stage or multistage, preferably two-stage distillation process in which the solvent is separated off at a pressure of from 0.1 to 15 bar in a first apparatus in the first stage and at from 1 to 900 mbar in a second apparatus in the second stage or further apparatuses, with wherein the heat of condensation of the solvent vapor from the first apparatus ~~being used~~ is utilized for partial or complete vaporization of solvent in the second apparatus.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein distillation columns are used as ~~apparatuses~~ the first apparatus and the second apparatus for separating off the solvent.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A The process ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the pressure in the first apparatus is from 0.5 to 3 bar.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A The process of claim 1 ~~as claimed in any of~~ ~~claims 1 to 3~~, wherein the pressure in the second apparatus is from 50 to 500 mbar.

Claim 5-6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): ~~A The process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 of claim 1, wherein further comprising a device for utilizing the heat of condensation of the solvent vapor from the first apparatus to vaporize the solvent of the second apparatus the thermal coupling is achieved by means of a flow through vaporizer, preferably a falling film evaporator, long tube evaporator or thin film evaporator.~~

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): ~~A The process of claim 1 as claimed in any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the at least one inert organic solvent used is chlorobenzene, dichlorobenzene or a mixture of the two or toluene, toluene, or a combination of chlorobenzene and dichlorobenzene.~~

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): ~~A The process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 8 of claim 1, wherein the at least one isocyanate is tolylene diisocyanate (TDI), methylene-4,4'-di(phenyl isocyanate), methylene-2,4'-di(phenyl isocyanate), or methylene-2,2'-di(phenyl isocyanate) (MDI), or a mixture of these isomers or polymethylenepolyphenylene polyisocyanate (PMDI), or a mixture of MDI and PMDI or hexamethylene diisocyanate (HDI), or isophorone diisocyanate (IPDI), or a mixture thereof.~~

Claim 10 (New): The process of claim 2, wherein the pressure in the first apparatus is from 0.5 to 3 bar.

Claim 11 (New): The process of claim 2, wherein the pressure in the second apparatus is from 50 to 500 mbar.

Claim 12 (New): The process of claim 3, wherein the pressure in the second apparatus is from 50 to 500 mbar.

Claim 13 (New): The process of claim 2, further comprising a device for utilizing the heat of condensation of the solvent vapor from the first apparatus to vaporize the solvent of the second apparatus.

Claim 14 (New): The process of claim 3, further comprising a device for utilizing the heat of condensation of the solvent vapor from the first apparatus to vaporize the solvent of the second apparatus.

Claim 15 (New): The process of claim 7, wherein the device is selected from the group consisting of a flow-through vaporizer, a falling film evaporator, a long-tube evaporator, and a thin film evaporator

Claim 16 (New): The process of claim 13, wherein the device is selected from the group consisting of a flow-through vaporizer, a falling film evaporator, a long-tube evaporator, and a thin film evaporator.

Claim 17 (New): The process of claim 14, wherein the device is selected from the group consisting of a flow-through vaporizer, a falling film evaporator, a long-tube evaporator, and a thin film evaporator.

Claim 18 (New): The process of claim 2, wherein the at least one inert organic solvent is chlorobenzene, dichlorobenzene, toluene, or a combination of chlorobenzene and dichlorobenzene.

Claim 19 (New): The process of claim 3, wherein the at least one inert organic solvent is chlorobenzene, dichlorobenzene, toluene, or a combination of chlorobenzene and dichlorobenzene.

Claim 20 (New): The process of claim 4, wherein the at least one inert organic solvent is chlorobenzene, dichlorobenzene, toluene, or a combination of chlorobenzene and dichlorobenzene.

Claim 21 (New): The process of claim 8, wherein the at least one inert organic solvent is chlorobenzene, dichlorobenzene, toluene, or a combination of chlorobenzene and dichlorobenzene.